

ensuring an exceptional Catholic education and maintaining quality Catholic schools ensures that Catholic students in the future will continue to benefit from outstanding educational opportunities. An overwhelming percentage of students in our Diocese of Cleveland attend college, which is a sign of the excellent work of our local Catholic School systems are doing.

I would also like to recognize the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) for their efforts to promote educational and catechetical goals. By sponsoring events like the Seton Awards, which recognize individuals who have made outstanding contributions to Catholic education, the NCEA works diligently to insure better education across America.

Providing excellent educational opportunities for all children is one of the most important goals in our society. I am encouraged by the involvement of the students, teachers and parents who are observing the National Appreciation Day For Catholic Schools.

A TRIBUTE TO REV. VERNAL E. SIMMS

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 2, 2000

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Rev. Vernal E. Simms, the newly-elected President of Black Clergy of Philadelphia and a distinguished member of the church. Rev. Simms was born and raised in Boston, Massachusetts. Throughout his life, he has made undying efforts to serve the community and push forward to better the church and its people. He has spent tireless days helping in the production and creation of community developments such as weekly and monthly food programs, day care centers, and facilities to accommodate the older generation of his community. Rev. Simms has managed to organize a new way of life for many and continues to provide consistent efforts in furthering these ideas and expanding on the future of all communities that surround him. In the course of sharing his knowledge and compassion he has touched many while pastoring in Plymouth, Massachusetts; Chatham, New York; Brooklyn, New York; and Moorestown, New Jersey.

Rev. Simms currently serves as the pastor of Morris Brown African Methodist Episcopal Church in North Philadelphia, and the Vice President of the African Methodist Episcopal Preacher's meeting of Philadelphia and the Vicinity. While assuming such immense and prestigious responsibilities, he has found time to be a loving father of four and the husband of Mary L. Boxley.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my fellow Philadelphians to join me today in congratulating Rev. Vernal E. Simms, Sr. on his election as President of Black Clergy of Philadelphia and vicinity. I am confident that this organization will continue to grow and prosper under his leadership. I look forward to his successful future.

HONORING DONALD R. D'AMICO,
WINNER OF THE AMERICAN CENTURY AWARD

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 2, 2000

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to honor a winner of the American Century Award, Ronald R. D'Amico, Retired Colonel of the United States Air Force.

Colonel D'Amico served in the USAF for nearly 30 years, most of which were as a combat and fighter pilot. He flew 129 combat missions during the Korean War and over 100 missions in Vietnam during three tours of duty. Colonel D'Amico was awarded four Distinguished Flying Crosses for heroism, two Purple Hearts, and thirteen Air Medals among a total of 50 awards and decorations.

Colonel D'Amico also displayed a quality of character that makes us all proud to be Americans. During the Korean conflict, Don used some of his spare time to help an orphanage for Korean children. He would gather milk that the soldiers would not drink and take it to the orphanage along with other supplies, some of which were donated and mailed from his parents' church in Rochester, New York. Even now, Don keeps pictures of the children he helped.

During the Vietnam Conflict, Don nearly lost his life after being shot down during an attack on a heavily fortified enemy position. Fortunately, he and his crew were rescued and after nine months in the hospital, Don returned for two more tours of duty.

Since retiring from the Air Force in 1977, Don continues to be involved with issues and community service. In the 1980's, he volunteered with a variety of organizations that worked to educate America about the dangers of Communism. In 1989, he joined the Board of Directors of Street-Smart Inc., a program helping inner-city youth avoid the dangers of gang involvement. In 1990, Street-Smart was recognized by President Bush as one of the "Thousand Points of Light".

It is with this, Mr. Speaker, that I would like to honor Donald R. D'Amico, American Century Award Winner. He risked his life in defense of freedom and still gives selflessly to his country and community.

IN MEMORY OF DON HUTSON

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 2, 2000

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, it is with deep sadness that I inform the House of the death of Don Hutson, of Lebanon, Missouri. He was 68.

Mr. Hutson was born on November 4, 1931, in Kansas City, MO, to Alpha Henry and Lola Hutson. He graduated as valedictorian from Oak Grove High School and went on to graduate with honors from Central College. In 1958, he earned a juris doctor degree with honors from George Washington University Law School. He then spent 4 years as a staff assistant to Senator Stuart Symington. This gave him an opportunity to work on many leg-

islative issues beneficial to the state of Missouri.

Mr. Hutson was a well known and respected attorney, who practiced law in Kansas City and Lebanon for 40 years. Prior to entering private practice, he was appointed assistant prosecuting attorney for Jackson County, serving as chief trial attorney for most of the major felony cases in Kansas City. He was commended for successfully prosecuting and convicting dozens of organized-crime figures during one of the first national organized-crime drives.

Mr. Hutson was recognized for his numerous achievements throughout his life. He was named in Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities, Who's Who in America, Who's Who in the Midwest and Who's Who in American Law. In addition, he was active in his community and civic affairs. Mr. Hutson was an ordained minister in the Christian Church and served as a Christian Church minister at Oak Grove, Lone Jack and other churches in Missouri. He was the founder of the Lebanon Arts Council and involved with the Lebanon Chamber of Commerce and the Lebanon Concert Association.

I know the Members of the House will join me in extending heartfelt condolences to his family: his son, Eric; his three daughters, Sheila, Robin, and Heather; and five grandchildren.

A TRIBUTE TO REV. RANDALL McCASKILL

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 2, 2000

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Rev. Randall McCaskill and commend him for his accomplishments during his 3 year tenure as head of the Black Clergy of Philadelphia and the surrounding vicinity. Rev. McCaskill has inspired and aided countless citizens of Philadelphia during his leadership. Working together with the Rendell administration in fostering improved inter-racial relations, Rev. McCaskill gave his unique insight during such trying times as the 1998 Grays Ferry incident. It was in times of urgency such as this that Rev. McCaskill showed us how truly important he is to our city. As President of the Black Clergy of Philadelphia, he recognized his role as a motivating force in our community. He consistently offered solutions to numerous problems our city faced, maybe best illustrated by his diplomatic efforts during the sensitive School Board of Philadelphia budget negotiations of 1998-99 and his key role in resolving the potentially crippling dispute between SEPTA management, and its union heads and employees.

Rev. Randall McCaskill has been anything but passive in his efforts to help Philadelphians in need. He has assumed massive responsibility within a diverse body of national and local organizations, most obvious being his role as founder and pastor of the Olivet Baptist Church. As pastor, McCaskill manages the fiscal solvency of the church, which offers day care, job training, medical services, etc. Furthermore, Rev. McCaskill is a member of the original charter founders of the Opportunities Industrialization Centers and is Vice-President of the Strawberry Mansion Corporation,